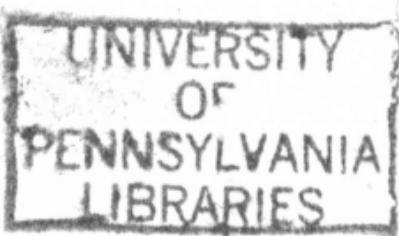


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Universal Obligatory Military Training and Service



A Catechism in
Twelve Lessons



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by GEORGE R. CONROY

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FOREWORD

The purpose of this pamphlet is to make as clear as possible the meaning of universal obligatory military training and service and to convince all believers in preparedness of the truth of these contentions:

1. That the Swiss system of universal obligatory military training and service, recommended for adoption in this country in modified form, is the only democratic system of national defense.
2. That it is antagonistic to militarism and entirely consistent with our ideals as a nation.
3. That it is imperative from the standpoint of individual and national justice.
4. That it is the only possible solution of our national defense problem, and that any believer in adequate preparedness who opposes this solution is unconsciously opposing adequate preparedness itself.

Investigation shows that the great mass of the American people realize the need of an adequate system of national defense.

The only question is as to what constitutes an adequate system of national defense, and how it can be attained.

In these pages, therefore, the *NEED* is taken for granted, and the attempt is made to show that it can be met only by the adoption of a reasonable modification of the Swiss system of military training and service.

LESSON FIRST

On What Universal Obligatory Military Training and Service Is

Q. *What is meant by "Universal Obligatory Military Training and Service?"*

A. A national system of compulsory instruction and training, carried on under federal supervision, which

1. Aims to make every normal male citizen a trained and disciplined soldier—physically, mentally and morally fit and ready to fight *effectively* for his country; and
2. Requires of every such citizen, within certain age limits, very brief yearly periods of military training in time of peace and instant response to any call for service in his country's defense.

Q. *Is this kind of military training and service based upon a new idea in this country?*

A. No. It is simply a logical, common sense development of the plan of national defense laid down by the framers of our Constitution.

Q. *Has it been tried anywhere in the world long enough to prove its worth?*

A. Yes. It has been in effect in the democratic republic of Switzerland with the greatest success since 1848, and in Australia since 1909.

Q. *Would it have any other result in this country than to build up a great citizen soldiery and guarantee our security against foreign aggression?*

A. Yes. As part of our educational system, the purpose of which is to bring out the best there is in each individual and to make that best of greatest service to society, universal military training would be of inestimable value to the nation.

Q. *In what way?*

A. It would instil into our boys the qualities of obedience and discipline, which are just as necessary in civil as in military life; it would arouse and keep alive the true spirit of patriotism, by making all men realize the obligations as well as the privileges of citizenship; it would promote democracy, by recognizing no class distinctions in the training, disciplining, organizing and service of the great citizen army of defense; and it would make a nation of virile, healthy, clean-living, clear-thinking, justice-loving men, prepared not only to maintain peace and promote prosperity and morality at home, but to do their whole part in the service of mankind and in hastening that day of practical universal brotherhood which we all hope is to come.

LESSON SECOND

On the Swiss and Australian Military Systems, which Demonstrate the Great Value of Universal Obligatory Military Training

Q. *At what age does the training of the boy begin under the Swiss military system?*

A. At the age of ten every Swiss schoolboy begins his program of physical training, consisting of the practice of exercises se-

lected after long experience and applied in keeping with their value as regards a systematic, harmonious training of the body and development of its organs.

Q. *How much time is spent in this work?*

A. At ten the boy spends two hours a week only, while at fifteen he devotes one hour a day to such exercises.

Q. *What is regarded as the most important feature of this physical training in the Swiss public schools?*

A. The *military training without arms* in absolute accordance with the army regulations.

Q. *At what age does the Swiss youth enter the military service?*

A. In his 19th year every Swiss male has to undergo a mental and physical examination. If he passes the test he is recruited as an infantry soldier and enters the service in his twentieth year.

Q. *What is the maximum of peace service demanded of a Swiss private of infantry from his twentieth to his forty-second year?*

A. Just 193 days, or an average of less than nine days per year for twenty-two years.

Q. *It is not actual service, then, but the training he receives before he reaches his twentieth year that makes the Swiss the soldier par excellence that he is?*

A. Exactly. As a result of the Swiss system the Swiss citizen soldier is the equal of any regular soldier in the world, and yet

instead of making arms his profession, as the regular soldier does, he is free to devote the whole of the productive period of his life almost exclusively to the pursuits of civil life.

Q. What are the essential features of the Australian military system?

A. In Australia every boy between the ages of 12 and 18 is compelled to undergo military instruction along with his other studies. When he reaches the age of 19 the Australian youth is a trained soldier and is then enrolled for a period of eight years in the battalion of the region in which he lives. During the period of his enrollment the Australian soldier is at all times liable for service in defense of his country, but when there is no call for such defensive service he is required to devote *only two weeks each year* to the practice of arms.

LESSON THIRD

On the Military Force that Would Result from Universal Obligatory Military Training in the United States

Q. How many males reach the age of twenty each year in the United States?

A. About one million.

Q. What percentage of these would be fit for military service?

A. At least 65 per cent., assuming, of course, that we had compulsory military training in the public schools.

Q. So that eventually, the United States, under the proposed system, would

have an active army and a reserve of how many men?

A. It would have an active army of 2,500,000 men under twenty-four years of age, and a reserve of nearly 8,000,000 trained soldiers between the ages of twenty-four and forty-five who could be called to the colors in case of a long war. In other words, universal obligatory military training and service would result in giving us such an immense army and reserve of thoroughly trained men that no nation or combination of nations would dare to attack us, or to interfere with the rights of our citizens on land or on sea.

LESSON FOURTH

On What Universal Military Training and Service has Done for Switzerland and Australia

Q. Has there been any recent demonstration of the value to Switzerland of her system of military training?

A. Yes, the most convincing possible. On the day that war was declared by France and Germany, the citizen soldiers of Switzerland were engaged in the peaceful occupations of civil life. Twenty-four hours later that little republic, with a population only about 100,000 greater than the population of Massachusetts, had 150,000 trained warriors upon her borders, fully equipped and organized for defense, and 300,000 reinforcements on the march. This wonderful demonstration of preparedness.

which has enabled Switzerland to remain at peace while war wages all around her, was made possible solely by her system of military training and service.

Q. What reason is there to believe that had Switzerland been less well prepared for defense she would have been dragged into the war?

A. The fate of the little unprepared nations, similarly situated proves that Switzerland's ability to maintain her rights by force of arms is all that enabled her to remain neutral in the world struggle. Frederick A. Kuenzli, assistant appraiser of the port of New York, and formerly a lieutenant in the Swiss army, made this clear in a recent address, when he said:

“Why did not Germany strike at France through Switzerland instead of through unprepared Belgium and defenseless Luxembourg? What prevented France and Italy from invading Germany at her most undefended frontiers through Switzerland? To both questions the answer is the same: The big powers knew how tremendous an obstacle the well-drilled and equipped, efficient, patriotic Swiss army manning the well-nigh impregnable fortification of Switzerland would be to any invasion conducted through her territory.”

Q. Has the worth of the Australian system of preparedness been similarly tested.

A. According to Hon. William H.

Hughes, prime minister of Australia, that Commonwealth would have been of comparatively little assistance to England in her present struggle had it not been for universal compulsory military training. In an address at Ottawa, Canada, Feb. 19, 1916, Mr. Hughes said:

“Australia has been able to do what she has done because we have adopted as the cornerstone of our democratic edifice the system of compulsory military training. . . . To this we owe the complex and widespread organization for training officers, non-commissioned officers, manufacturing small arms, ammunition, clothing and so on, without which we should have been almost helpless in this great struggle.”

LESSON FIFTH

On the Reasons for Such Opposition as Exists to Universal Obligatory Military Training and Service

Q. *Are there any believers in adequate national defense measures who question the advisability of universal obligatory military training and service?*

A. Unfortunately, yes.

Q. *Why do they question it?*

A. Because they have been led by the peace-at-any-price propagandists to fear that universal obligatory military training and service is an undemocratic system of monarchial origin and essence and that its adoption in this country would gradually instil into the minds of our people the spirit of militarism. 9

Q. Is this fear justified?

A. On the contrary, the Swiss system of universal military training and service, a modification of which is recommended for this country, is antagonistic to militarism and is the only basis for a really democratic system of national defense. Militarism means autocratic, greedy and brutal preparedness for war, while the military system we contemplate means democratic, unselfish preparedness for peace.

Q. Why do the professional pacifists try to mislead the public on this question?

A. Pacifists are constitutionally opposed to a healthy resistance and assertion of a national attitude except by the method of logical argumentation and do not appreciate the dangers of national antagonisms and supposed conflicting interests. Hence they are utterly opposed to an adequate system of national defense, and they regard universal obligatory military training and service for an adequate national defense system as a waste and an injury in this country. They know that the defeat of the plan for universal military training would mean the defeat of the whole preparedness movement.

LESSON SIXTH

On What Constitutes "Militarism" and Why it Would be Impossible in this Country Under Universal Military Training and Service

Q. What is meant by the term "militarism"?

A. The term is now used almost wholly in reference to the policy of maintaining great standing armies, not simply for purposes of defense, but equally for purposes of conquest. Militarism, however, involves the establishment of a military caste which is socially superior to any other class in the community and which is not amenable to the rules of conduct laid down for the civilian.

Q. *Does militarism rest upon the doctrine that "might makes right"?*

A. It does. It believes that the strong should rule the weak and that any nation is justified in seizing what it has the power to seize and holding all it has the power to hold.

Q. *Does the maintenance of a great standing army necessarily mean militarism?*

A. Yes. In theory it is possible to have a great standing army without danger of militarism, but in practice the great standing army and militarism go hand in hand.

Q. *How can that be?*

A. Militarism means a desire for conquest, a desire to dominate. It places an undue emphasis upon military achievement and military glory. It believes with Bernhardi that "war is a biological necessity of the first importance, a regulative element in the life of mankind that cannot be dispensed with." In other words, militarism is a national spirit, and the great standing army is merely the instrument through which it must act. Therefore, while in theory a na-

tion might maintain a great standing army for purely defensive purposes, as a guarantee of peace and not because of a desire for war or conquest, as a matter of fact the great standing army, being the essential instrument of *effective* militarism, is consequently the product of militarism and is not likely to be tolerated in any country in which the spirit of conquest does not exist. Universal military training renders a large and costly standing army unnecessary.

LESSON SEVENTH

On Why a Modification of the Swiss Military System is the Only Practicable Solution of our National Defense Problem

Q. *Why does the National Security League contend that the United States can never be adequately prepared for defense without a great citizen soldiery developed under a system of universal obligatory military training and service?*

A. Because the only conceivable alternative is impracticable, if not utterly impossible.

Q. *What is that alternative?*

A. The creation and maintenance of a navy powerful enough to prevent the landing of hostile forces at any point upon our thousands of miles of coast line, or the creation and maintenance of a standing army large enough to combat the enemy forces which, in the absence of such a navy, could easily be landed upon our shores by any first class power.

Q. Why is the creation and maintenance of either of those forces regarded as impracticable?

A. A navy which could be depended upon to secure us against invasion would have to compare in power with that now possessed by Great Britain. It has taken England centuries to arrive at her present naval power, and the construction of such a navy by the United States would not only take so many years that it might be useless when completed by reason of changing methods of warfare, but would entail an intolerable tax burden upon the American people. We need a navy very much more powerful than that we now possess, but public sentiment would never tolerate a navy large enough to render us absolutely safe against attack. As for an army of the size mentioned, it would be impracticable for these reasons:

1. It would savor of militarism and therefore would constitute a complete reversal of our national policy and be entirely out of harmony with our traditions and ideals.

2. It would impose an unwarranted burden of expense upon the people and result in an incalculable economic loss to the nation.

3. Public sentiment is, and very likely always will be, opposed to such an army not only for the reasons stated, but because its maintenance would be considered a reversion to autocratic military

ideals; wherefore, Congress would not dare to authorize it, and if authorized, it could not be recruited.

Q. Why could it not be recruited?

A. Because the spirit of militarism is utterly lacking in our people, and because, while the American soldier receives higher pay than the soldier of any other nation, so small is this pay compared with the earning power of the average American in civil life that comparatively few desirable men feel called upon to make the sacrifice of enlistment.

Q. Is that statement based upon experience?

A. Yes; it is confirmed by our whole military history. The record shows that, excepting possibly the higher places in the service, arms as a profession does not appeal to the average American. He does not like the life. To get men to fill the ranks has always been difficult, and it is a matter of common knowledge that even under the stress of excitement on the Mexican border the effort to increase our present inadequate army has been anything but successful.

Q. Could we not build up a great standing arm by the monarchial system of Europe, which takes over every fit male for from one to three years of his adult life?

A. Yes; and that is all that needs to be said against the great standing army; it could be raised by conscription and in no other way. It could never be created or

maintained in this country except against the will of the people and in violation of every principle of democratic government.

LESSON EIGHTH

On the Need of a Small Regular Army to Perform Certain Duties Which Could not be Expected of Citizen Soldiers

Q. *Would the creation of a citizen army under universal military training make it unnecessary to maintain even a small standing army?*

A. No; in the words of Mr. Henry L. Stimson, former Secretary of War, "we shall always need a *small* regular army, not only to serve as a nucleus and training corps for our citizens, but to be what we call our first line or emergency defense, both against internal disorder and against invasion, and also to perform the expeditionary service occasion for which, in our development as a great power in the world, has become increasingly frequent."

Q. *Is this in accordance with our national policy?*

A. Yes; it has always been the policy of the United States to depend upon both classes of soldiers—those who make military service their regular work in peace as well as in war, and those who are called for service only in case of emergency or war.

Q. *So that our policy in this respect would not be changed under the proposed system?*

A. No. The only difference would be

one of *efficiency*. Under universal military training our citizens would go to the front, if called, *absolutely fit*—every man at least as good a fighting unit as any soldier in the world; whereas, under our present volunteer system, our citizens are sent to meet the enemy in a state of unfitness that constitutes nothing short of criminal negligence on the part of the nation. Furthermore, under the proposed system, an army of *millions of fit men* could be mobilized in a fraction of the time that it now takes to mobilize an army of *thousands of unfit men*. In case of trouble with a first class power, the difference would mean *THE LIFE OF THE NATION*.

LESSON NINTH

On Universal Obligatory Military Training as the Only Basis for a Truly Democratic System of National Defense

Q. *What authority is there for the statement that a military system based upon universal obligatory training and service is democratic?*

A. In the first place, there is the authority of history. Switzerland has had universal obligatory military training and service for nearly seventy years. Switzerland has been a republic for six hundred years and the Swiss people stand, like ourselves, as the guardians of liberty and as living examples of the success of orderly self-government. We have also the authority of some of our greatest men and the authority of common sense. Thomas Jeffer-

son, the patron saint of democracy, was a persistent advocate of universal obligatory military training, and Madison and Monroe expressed similar sentiments. Indeed, it is clear from their utterances that most of our great men of the past, from Washington down, had universal military training and service in mind, and history shows that if their counsel had been followed this nation would have been saved the sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of lives and untold millions of money.

Q. Have some of our present-day leaders testified to the democracy of universal obligatory training and service?

A. Yes, many of them, including Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor; Theodore Roosevelt, Robert Bacon, former Secretary of State; Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War; Alton B. Parker, Joseph H. Choate, and others of equal prominence in the life of the nation.

Q. What is the testimony of common sense as to the democracy of the proposed system?

A. Democracy means equality of obligation as well as of rights and opportunities, and common sense tells us that we cannot have such equality when the burden of defending their common country does not fall equally upon all the people, rich and poor, high and low alike, or when class and "pull" are recognized in the organization of the nation's military forces. It tells us, furthermore, that under universal obligatory

military training and service the people will control their army just as they control their government; that no man, whatever his standing in civil life, will be allowed to shirk his duty as a soldier, and that the place of every man in the military organization will be determined by merit and by nothing else.

LESSON TENTH

On the Necessity of Universal Military Training as a Matter of Individual and National Justice

Q. Would a national defense system based upon universal obligatory military training and service increase the liability of the individual citizen to serve as a soldier in case of war?

A. It would not. Our government now has power—a power which was exercised during the Civil War—to compel every citizen to take up arms and fight for this country, but it is under no obligation to prepare him for such dangerous and exacting service.

Q. Is that just?

A. On the contrary, it is the essence of injustice. General Henry Lee, a distinguished Revolutionary officer, epitomized the matter admirably when he said:

“A government is the murderer of its citizens which sends them to the field uninformed and untaught, where they are to meet men of the same age and strength, mechanized by education and disciplined for battle.”

Q. *A system of obligatory training, then, would simply require the government to compel its citizens to train for the performance of a duty which they are now obliged to perform whether trained or not?*

A. Exactly.

Q. *But isn't it unjust to compel the citizen to train for a duty which he might be willing to perform, if left to himself, without preliminary training?*

A. No more unjust than it is to compel him to go to school when a boy, or to compel him to do jury duty and pay taxes, and all these things are compulsory under our system of government. It must be remembered that government is organized, not for the benefit of the individual, but for the benefit of the community; and whenever the desires of the individual run counter to the interests of the community, the individual must give way. But in this case there is no question of such a conflict, for it is equally for the benefit of the individual and the community that every citizen be trained to do his best in defense of himself, his family and his nation.

Q. *But under our present system, will our citizens not volunteer for service in sufficiently large numbers, and will they not have time to prepare after hostilities have begun?*

A. Rivers of blood have flowed and billions of treasure has been wasted in testimony of the utter failure of our volunteer system. Some men will volunteer and

others will not, and it is unjust to those who volunteer to ask them to fight for those who are too unpatriotic or too cowardly to fight for themselves. Citizenship means service as well as rights, and no man is worthy to enjoy the rights of citizenship who is unwilling to prepare for effective service in defense of those rights. As for training after war has begun, Frederic L. Huidekoper, a great military authority, says that "adequate preparation for war has never yet in history been made after the beginning of hostilities without unnecessary slaughter, unjustifiable expense and national peril," and every war in which this country has engaged is eloquent in proof of that assertion.

Q. There is as much justice, then, in obligatory military training as there is in obligatory education?

A. There is no difference. Military training is education—education of mind and body; and to make it compulsory in our public schools is merely to extend our educational system to include a branch of knowledge which is absolutely necessary as a matter of justice to the individual, to the family and to the nation.

LESSON ELEVENTH

On the Superiority of the Proposed System of National Defense from the Stand-point of Economy

Q. What is to be said of universal obligatory military training and service from the point of view of economy?

A. It is impossible to measure the tremendous economic superiority of such a system over any other system known. Of course, the mere question of cost should not be a controlling factor in the adoption of a system of national defense, except where other things are equal, because what we must have is an *adequate* system and whatever that costs is money well invested, while whatever may be the cost of anything short of adequacy is money wasted. In the case of universal obligatory military training and service, however, we have the basis of a system which is not only *adequate* from a purely military point of view, but which is infinitely cheaper than any other system to create and to maintain, while in its effect in improving the health and promoting the industrial and general efficiency of the whole people its ultimate value to the nation would be beyond computation.

LESSON TWELFTH

On What the Friends of Preparedness Must Do to Secure the Adoption of a System of Universal Obligatory Military Training and Service

Q. *Have any steps been taken toward securing the legislation necessary for the proposed military system?*

A. Yes, a bill providing for a system of universal obligatory military training and service, introduced by Senator Chamberlain of Oregon, chairman of the Senate committee on military affairs, was reported

by that committee at the last session of Congress. It was upon the Senate calendar when Congress adjourned.

Q. What are the provisions of this bill?

A. It provides that every male citizen of the United States between the ages of 19 and 26 shall undergo military or naval training for a period of six months in regularly constituted camps to be established for the purpose. The training shall take place in the year in which a youth reaches the age of 19, except in certain specified cases, when the training shall take place in succeeding years up to the age of 26. The following exemptions are made,—members of the permanent military or naval forces of the United States, the physically unfit, and men upon whose earnings an immediate relative is wholly dependent for support. Penalty of a fine of \$1,000 or a year's imprisonment, or both, is imposed.

Q. Are there other proposed measures?

A. Representative Kahn introduced in the House during the last session a bill drawn by the General Staff of the Army. It provides that each youth of 18 shall undergo military training for 11 months during the year he reaches that age and for 15 days during each of the two succeeding years. The exemptions are practically the same as in the Chamberlain bill. The penalty imposed is a fine of not less than \$10 or more than \$200 and by imprisonment for not less than one month or more than a year.

*Q. Does the National Security
endorse these measures?*

A. The League endorses the principle of universal obligatory military training service, which it regards as the first of cardinal requirements for preparedness, but it has not endorsed any particular measure leaving the details of the system to be incorporated in a military training law after the subject has been given full consideration by the committees in Congress having the matter in charge.

Q. What should the friends of preparedness do to promote the enactment of a universal military training measure?

A. They should speak and write to their representatives in Congress and make them understand that public opinion demands action, and prompt action. There is no time to lose. The danger of delay can not be overestimated. The change proposed is not revolutionary, but merely progressive. In universal obligatory military training and service lies the only safe-guard for the nation, and the patriotic duty rests upon those who now realize that fact, to make others realize it as soon as possible. Let us never forget that in this way, and in this way only, lies safety, and that to postpone action for even one year may mean national disaster.

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